



Baltimore City
Department of Finance



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- Overview of the City's latest Lean event
- Announcement of FY 2015 Innovation Fund project awards
- A look at the City's Environmental Health project
- How the City plans to Build a Lean Culture
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Leaning Forward

The Official Newsletter of Lean and Innovative Thinking for the City of Baltimore

May 2014

Volume 1, Issue 2

Lean Government Event Updates: RBDL Process and MOED One-Stop Career Center



In the fall of 2013, the City held two Lean pilots: one examining the retail business districting license (RBDL) process within the Department of Finance and one examining service delivery at the One-Stop Career Center in Mondawmin Mall, operated by the Mayor's Office of Employment Development. Since the implementation of the changes that emerged during the Lean events, both processes have shown remarkable improvement.

The RBDL Lean event gathered members from the Dept. of Finance and the Baltimore Development Corporation to examine the process and try to find ways to streamline it. During the Lean event, the steps to collect RBDL fees were reduced from 93 to 33. The time it took to complete the process was decreased from over 350 hours to 225. Other changes included reformatting the bill to make them easier for business owners to understand and creating a standard work document so that economic development officers at BDC had a uniform way to measure business space. The results of the process changes have been impressive. As of April 2014, the total revenue collected was \$149,616 compared to \$142,941 in all of FY2013. Additionally, the percentage of businesses that paid between 31-60 days is thus far 13%, up from 4.63% in FY2013. The number of abatements of payments has also sharply declined. In FY2013, there were 141 abatements. Thus far in FY2014, there have only been 41 abatements—an almost 70% decrease.

The One-Stop Career Center Lean event was equally successful. Several changes were made including the use of two doors instead of one to handle crowds, the reassignment of where the security guard sat, and providing electronic orientation on CDs instead of only offering it in-person twice a week. The results were remarkable—the days to full registration and orientation went from 7 days to same day service. Because customers are now able to receive orientation in one day, they are also able to start receiving services in one day as well. And, there is no longer any backlog of information waiting to be entered into the system; all data entry is done same day.

Going forward, BBMR will continue to monitor the results of the Lean improvements. Congratulations to the participants on great events! Please visit bbmr.baltimorecity.gov/LeanGovernmentLeanEvents.aspx to view the report outs of the Lean events.

More Accuracy, More Revenue, More Satisfaction: Leaning the Parking Meter Bagging Process

The City's parking meter bagging process—the process by which a citizen or other entity can request that parking meters in a certain area be taken out of service, i.e. have an orange bag placed over them to denote that they are temporarily unuseable—is a process that involves three agencies: the Parking Authority of Baltimore City (PABC), the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Department of General Services (DGS). Historically, there had been many problems with the process. Often, the notice given to PABC was not enough for them to get the bags over the meters in time to honor the request. The right-of way (ROW) permit, which included designating parking meters to be bagged, was unclear and confusing. These same permits could not be submitted or paid for online—everything was a paper process that had to be done in person. Even the fact that a person is required to obtain a parking meter bagging permit if they planned to obstruct a parking meter was not well known to the public. Parking meters were sometimes not bagged in a timely fashion, resulting in angry citizens, who complained to City leaders. Conversely, parking meters were not always unbagged in a timely fashion, resulting in a loss of revenue for the City. The entire process was messy, confusing, and left many people feeling like the process was ineffective.



In March, staff from PABC, DOT, and DGS gathered in the Innovation Lab to “lean” the parking meter bagging process. The event was facilitated by John and Matt Beakes of Operational Performance Solutions, Inc. After basic Lean training for the participants, the team got to work on examining the process and identifying waste. Working together, the team decided on a number of improvements, such as developing a FAQ page for permits on the DGS website, creating a revised and separate application for the ROW permit and the parking meter bags, placing sleeves on the meter bags so that information on when they were placed on meters and should be removed could be visible, assigning removal of bags to DOT staff when PABC was not present, and distributing information to other agencies, like HCD, who might come into contact with people who needed parking meter bags. Longer term goals included creating an online ROW application with a payment option.



Several weeks after the event, the three agencies came together for a status update. To date, drafts of the revised right-of-way application and parking meter applications have been created, a protocol for the removal of bags by DOT has been drafted, a “Helpful Hints” website to be linked to the PABC website has been drafted, and HCD has agreed to disseminate information about meter bagging. In the next several months, implementation progress will be monitored.

Excellent firms don't believe in excellence - only in constant improvement and constant change. ~ Tom Peters

See the parking meter bagging process report out video on BBMR's website at:
<http://bbmr.baltimorecity.gov/LeanGovernment/LeanEvents>

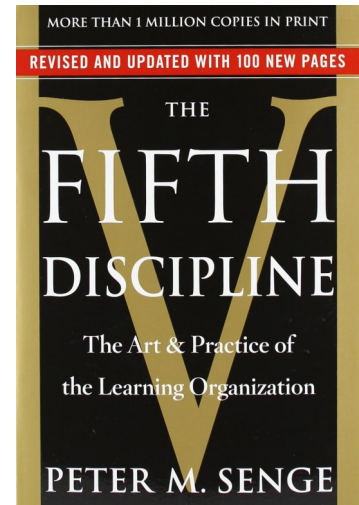
Building a Lean Culture

The City is excited to continue its Lean journey! To that end, the City issued an RFP asking for bids for two initiatives: Lean event facilitation and Lean training for City employees. Successful bidders for facilitating Lean events will be placed on a qualified vendors list (QVL). Vendors on the QVL will have the opportunity to lead Lean events on a rotating basis dependent on availability and expertise. The vendor who is chosen for Lean training will train City employees in beginner, intermediate, and advanced classes. Employees will receive training in various Lean philosophies, techniques, and strategies with the goal of them becoming Lean leaders in their departments and agencies. Students in beginner classes who show a particular aptitude for Lean thinking and implementation will be recommended for the higher level classes with the goal of building a portfolio of Lean projects and eventually earning a Bronze certification as a Lean facilitator.

The City's RFP committee is currently reviewing the bids from vendors to add to the QVL and to provide Lean training. Stay tuned for the selections!

Our next Good Government Book Club selection is *The Fifth Discipline* by Peter Senge. For this GGBC selection, there will be two meetings: one on July 23rd and the other on August 27th, both at 12pm in the Innovation Lab (201 East Baltimore Street, 2nd Floor). The July 23rd meeting will cover chapters 1-3 and the August 27th meeting will cover the remainder of the book. This book was recommended by John Beakes, the City's Lean facilitator, and John will be leading our discussion at both meetings.

Dessert will be served! If you have any questions, please contact Amy Costanzo at amy.costanzo@baltimorecity.gov



Employee Innovations Program

The City is pleased to announce the launch of the Employee Innovations Program (EIP). This program encourages employees with great ideas to submit them to City Hall. What is a great idea? One that seeks to improve customer service, employee relations, administrative procedures, operations, equipment, production methods, safety measures, or other aspects of the work environment while generating revenue and/or operational savings. Proposals may be made by an individual employee or jointly by two or more employees. Proposals must result in significant savings in terms of time, money, or materials, solve an operational problem, increase revenue, or greatly improve customer service or other service performance.

If your idea is selected and implemented, a cash award may be made. Generally, awards will amount to 5% of the anticipated savings or increased revenue, up to a maximum of \$5,000. Awards of \$500 may be made for service performance improvements that don't have a budget savings. The Innovation Program Committee will judge all applications and BBMR will notify the employee if their idea has been chosen.

Applications with full details can be obtained at bbmr.baltimorecity.gov/InnovationProgram/EmployeeInnovationsProgram.aspx. Completed applications should be emailed to budget@baltimorecity.gov. Good luck!

- Good Government Book Club Meeting: July 23, 2014 and August 27, 2014

Upcoming
Events



Two New Innovation Fund Projects Announced for Fiscal 2015

The Department of Finance is pleased to announce the two newest Innovation Fund projects for the City of Baltimore: Baltimore Forensic Institute of Training and Innovation and Megapixel Madness.

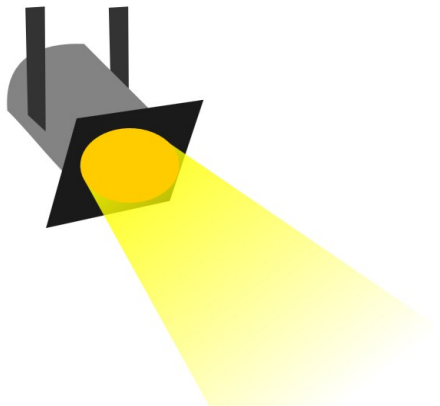
Baltimore Forensic Institute of Training and Innovation—\$342,000

This project will upgrade and establish a forensics training and analysis center within the BCPD crime lab. A MiSeq Next Generation Sequencer, a premier tool in the field of DNA analysis, will be purchased. This tool will have the capacity to run a higher volume of more comprehensive DNA analysis, leading to higher crime solvability rates and reducing the backlog of DNA samples waiting to be analyzed. It will also be less expensive than the current tools in the crime lab used for DNA analysis, leading to a savings for the City. Additionally, other jurisdictions will be charged a fee for the analysis of their own DNA samples by the MiSeq Sequencer. This project also includes a forensics training component that would be provided to crime lab employees free of charge and to employees from other jurisdictions at a cost. The expected return on investment is 132%.

Megapixel Madness—\$158,000

This project will transition the crime lab from the use of film photography to digital photography. Only selected photographs will be printed (as opposed to an entire roll of film currently) and staff members dedicating their time to developing film can complete other tasks instead. The expected return on investment is 135%.

Innovation Spotlight: Environmental Health



In FY2012, the Bureau of Environmental Health (EH) was awarded \$140,800 to modernize its administrative and enforcement processes. Previously, the inspection and investigations processes for EH relied on handwritten documents that were submitted to data entry clerks. This led to incorrect information being provided to the clerk, incorrect input of data by the clerks, misplaced or lost files, documents that were illegible, and massive storage needs for all of the documents. Funding was designated to purchase off-the-shelf, customizable quality management software (QMS) system and equip each sanitarian with a personal digital assistant (PDA). The QMS system and PDAs have two main purposes: 1) to provide EH with the ability to automate and standardize its licensing, scheduling, inspection and investigation processes and 2) to provide a public web-based interface, which will allow people to review public records, renew licenses, upload requested business documents, and schedule plan review inspections.

Thus far, the EH project has generated over \$1.4 million in permit and license renewals. Training will continue in the 4th quarter of FY14 for field staff with the use of the handheld devices for conducting inspections.

Photo: Two EH inspectors investigate the various functions of the PDAs.





Light Bulb Thought



Each issue of *Leaning Forward* will contain a Light Bulb Thought—something to provoke thinking along the line of innovating, improving, and progressing. This issue's Light Bulb Thought is adapted from “9 Ways Leaders’ Actions Can Sustain Lean Progress” by Mike Noonan and Joe Panebiano (2013). Here are some suggestions on how to keep Lean momentum going and maintain its gains.

Communicate the Vision

A key aspect of sustaining progress is communicating to employees how Lean is working to the organization's benefits and the successes that are being realized because of it. Communicating the long-term goals of Lean and how the day-to-day work furthers those goals not only provides status updates, but keeps employees motivated and moral high.

Always Update Standard Work

Standard work is a core tenet of Lean; when everything is done the same way, anyone can slide into another person's role and know how to do something. Standard work changes with the needs and demands of an organization, and supervisors should be willing to reevaluate previously created standard work plans.

Go on Walks

Taking walks throughout an office, plant, or other space where Lean improvement has taken place is a good way to see the improvement and to ask employees what is going right and what needs more attention.

Build a Continuous Improvement Culture

True lean leadership encourages continuous improvement even when the improvement ideas don't meet expectations. By making it acceptable to try something even if it fails, leaders empower workers to assume responsibility for solving their own problems.

Foster a Respectful, Team-Driven Organization

Teamwork is an essential element of any lean initiative because it requires employees from different departments to work together to improve processes that almost always cross functional boundaries. Encouraging groups to contribute their ideas and responding to their suggestions is one way that teamwork demonstrates respect. Engendering respect and mutual trust is a critical element of any lean initiative.

Continue to Motivate Employees

In order to motivate employees, leaders can participate in Lean events and be part of the problem-solving process. Leaders can also motivate individuals by increasing their autonomy and encouraging them to find ways to permanently improve their work.

Maintain Regular Training

Another way to sustain lean is through non-stop training of all employees, including supervisors, in the redesigned and improved work processes. Cross-training employees is also critical. Employees who have been trained in all the primary work processes tend to exhibit a more proprietary attitude toward improving their own work processes and offering ideas to improve other processes.

Reinforce Performance and Progress with Metrics and Visual Management Tools

Tracking and reporting performance metrics help sustain the organization's commitment to Lean at both the leadership level and on the front lines.

Publish Continuous Improvement Scorecards, Reports, or Updates

Tracking progress on a regular basis reinforces accountability and gives everyone the chance to check on and see results.